



Town of Warren, Rhode Island

Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Special Meeting on November 17, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at Warren Town Hall. The presiding officer was Karen Dionne. Board members present were Sara Volino, Kathy Tucciarone, Ben Terry, Stephen Smith and Mark Lombardi. Christine Lichatz was absent. Mo Clare was in attendance. Town Council members Steven Thompson and Brandt Heckert were in attendance. Keri Cronin from Discover Warren was present at the meeting as a guest. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB.

1. Review and Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting held October 20, 2014

The October meeting of the EDB was cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

2. Update on marketing opportunities for Warren.

Mr. Smith updated the board on the proposal to Town Council to create a Facebook page that will promote business and market the town. This page would be linked to the town website, and it would also be linked to the Discover Warren website. He reported that there was concern about how funds would be allocated for the project as well as concern about the overall content. Although Town Council was in agreement with the general idea, the details of the project need to be more defined before moving forward.

3. Visit by Discover Warren representatives to discuss joint initiatives.

Ms. Cronin reported that Discover Warren is currently in the process of redesigning its website to more effectively market both the commercial and cultural aspects of Warren. Discover Warren is seeking to have their website linked to the town website.

4. Discussion regarding way finding signage.

This item was discussed as part of Economic Initiatives for 2015.

5. Economic Initiatives for 2015.

Ms. Dionne briefly reviewed initiatives and actions completed by the EDB during the past years. These items included parking, wayfinding and parking signage, and gateway

signage. Also, the EDB contributed to the draft of the economic development section of the comprehensive plan. The EDB also advocated for a business friendly town hall, which resulted in a business coordinator position at Town Hall.

The board discussed researching and creating a proposal for the Town Hall to put together a new website that would both disseminate information and promote the town. Mr. Heckert said that the EDB would be more likely to receive funding for a project like the Town website if the parameters are clearly defined and include a specific budget proposal. Mr. Smith will research the websites of similarly sized towns; Ms. Dionne, Mr. Terry and Ms. Tucciarone will review the current town website.

The board continued to discuss future initiatives for the upcoming year including business outreach programs. Also, the board discussed the need for delineated parking and additional way finding signage. Ms. Cronin noted that Discover Warren will include parking information on it's website. Mr. Lombardi and Ms. Tucciarone created a new work group to focus on business tax incentives.

A motion was made to adjourn by Ms. Volino, the motion was seconded by Ms. Dionne, and all members were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald
December 15, 2014

